Where Bodies and Hopes Are Reconstructed

The Miracle Shop at Base Hospital No. 3 in Jersey

By ELENE FOSTER

A BOY in khaki with one empty sleeve sat in Major Johnson's office at the army hospital at Rahway, N. J., and talked of the future. He was a fine, clean-cut young fellow, with that direct look in the eyes which is typical of our fighting men who are coming back to us from overseas.

"What sort of work did you do before you went into the service?" Major Johnson was asking him as I entered the room.

"I was a shipping clerk, sir, in a railroad office back home. I'm afraid I wouldn't be much good at that now with this; you see, it's my right one," and he pointed to the empty sleeve. "I thought, maybe, you could give me a little advice as to what line of work I can go into, if you don't mind, sir."

The Unimportance of Arms and Legs

"That's what I'm here for, my boy," replied the major, "and I'll tell you this right at the start, Jennings—arms and legs aren't nearly as important as we have always considered them to be. There is plenty of work in this country for anybody that comes back to it sound from the neck up. The rest of him doesn't matter if his brain is all right and he wants to make good. Are they going to give you an artificial arm?"

"No, sir; the ball and socket are gone, so there's nothing to attach it to; but I'm not worrying. Gee, sir, it was worth it!"

"Where did you get it?"

"At Château Thierry. It was a great day, sir. I was only sorry that I was balled out so early in the game. I kept up a good while after I got this, and then a bullet got me in the chest and I went down. That healed up fine, and this is getting along O. K., so I must be thinking of getting back to work. I used to make $30 a week in the railroad office and they promised me the job after the war; but, of course, that's all off now."

"I don't see that, Jennings," said the major. "All you've got to do is to learn to write with your left hand, and there's no reason on earth why you shouldn't get to be the president of that railroad if you work hard enough. You didn't leave your ambition in the operating room, did you?"

"No, sir, I did not. There's a girl back home; well, I've been practising writing with my left hand ever since I was able to sit up, and I'm getting on fine. Do you really think it won't make any difference? I'd like to study interstate railways while I'm here if I could get some books."

"Fine!" exclaimed the major. "You go over to the school building and get Corporal Bach to help you with the writing. He's teaching a lot of you left-handed fellows. I'll send to the American Library Association for technical books on railways. Come in and see me once in a while, Jennings, and don't get discouraged. Remember, if you're sound from the neck up there's a good job waiting for you."

Private Sullivan on Paris Styles in Wearing Hands

The next man had a stiff right arm.

"Private Sullivan, sir," he said. "I come fer a bit of advice, ef ye'll be so good, sir. You see it's this way, sir. I was a train dispatcher before I wint inter the service, sir, airnin' me $50 a week, but yer see I can't go back to it, sir, on account of the way that me hand is permanently located on me arm. You see, sir, it's up on edge, as you might say, sir, and it ain't much use to me in that position. No doubt it's the latest Paris style for wearing hands, but the good, old-fashioned way, palms down, sir, seems to suit me figger better and is a good deal more useful. The same bein' the case, believe me, sir, it's some problem to think out a job where I can use this new-fangled flapper to advantage, sir."

"The elbow joint is shattered, I suppose," said the major. Private Sullivan nodded. "Would you submit to another operation if the hand could be turned as you want it?"

"Sure," was the cheery reply. "Thim operations mane nothin' in my young life, sir. I've had six of thim already, and I belave there's luck in odd numbers."

The major took up the telephone and held a long conversation with one of the surgeons, at the close of which he turned to Sullivan:

"They can fix you up all right," he said. "Call on Major Blank to-morrow morning at 10 o'clock and he'll make an examination. They will probably have to break the arm again. Are you sure that you want to go through with it?"

"Sure, I'd lose both me arms, sir, and maybe throw in a leg for good measure, if I could get back on that little old job, sir. I thank you, sir; to-morrow at 10, ye said?"

"Does that surprise you?" asked the major. "That is very simple. You should see some of the real miracles that our surgeons perform. For instance, not long ago a man came to me who had had his hand shot away so that nothing remained but the thumb and perhaps two-thirds of the palm. He had done some particular kind of work in a machine shop, and he told me that he could have gone back to it if only he had had one finger left which he could use with the thumb. I called up Major Albee, our head surgeon, and told him the situation. He replied without a moment's hesitation that he would build a finger for the man—and he did. He took out a piece of one of his ribs and grafted it on to the palm of the hand, and he has a perfectly good finger."

At this juncture a wheeled chair rolled into the room propelled by a young fellow who had lost both legs just below the knees. His eyes were bright, his cheeks were rosy and his smile was as cheerful as if he hadn't a sorrow in the world.

A Farmer Minus Two Legs Makes a Landscape Gardener

"Good morning, sir," he said. "You'll excuse me, I know, for remaining seated," this with a wider smile and a merry little twinkle in his eyes. "Corporal Wingate is my name. I've brought my problem to you, sir. When I enlisted I had just graduated from the Amherst Agricultural College and I was going in for scientific farming. As you see, I met with a little accident 'over there' and I guess farming is out of the question. I am to have two artificials, but I doubt if I'll ever be able to navigate with them sufficiently well to do any practical field work, so I'm sort of up against it. I'm not worrying about it, you understand, but I just naturally would like to know where I go from here."

"Ever think of landscape gardening?"

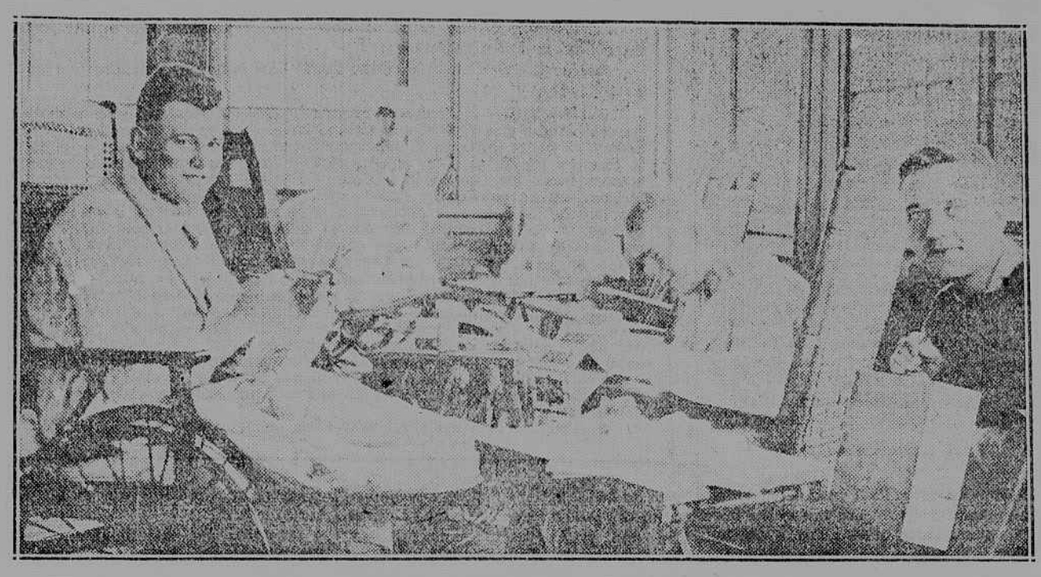
"Yes sir, I studied it a bit in college. I think I'd make a fairly good draftsman with a little practice."

"Then that's the trick for you, Wingate; we'll get some books and you can go into the class in mechanical drafting. With your practical knowledge of farming you ought to do pretty well. How does it strike you?"

"All to the good, sir. You don't know what a weight you've lifted from my mind. I thank you, sir," and he wheeled himself out.

The Château Thierry Spirit Wins at Rahway, N. J.

The hospital at Rahway takes in only men who have suffered a serious injury to an arm or a leg; there are no shell-shock cases, no victims of gas attacks, no patients suffering from internal injuries. The atmosphere is essentially a happy and hopeful one. Every patient within its walls feels comparatively certain of his ultimate recovery. Operations are taken philosophically. The long line of men on stretchers outside the operating room awaiting their turn laugh and sing and joke with one another as they would if they were standing in a queue outside the gallery entrance of a theatre. This optimistic atmosphere is of infinite help in the work of reconstruction, and it will not be the fault of the hospital staff or the reconstruction aids or the patients themselves if every one of those 2,000 men does not leave the hospital "fit" in every way, morally, mentally and physically, and ready and eager to meet the new conditions of his life.



Laughing and working while the bones do the knitting

"Cheero" Is the Motto, Under Ether or Under Fire

The army hospital at Rahway, N. J.—Base Hospital No. 3 is its official title—has been in running order for only about two months, and it is still in a very unfinished condition. One of the largest buildings is devoted to classrooms and workshops and is known as "the school." The first pupils were received a little more than a month ago, and, although much of its equipment is still wanting and its book shelves are bare, it is running merrily on and its corps of teachers are busy from morning until night. There are classrooms for the study of telegraphy, bookkeeping and accounting, mathematics, English, penmanship and typewriting, and shops for the study of electricity, machinery, shoe repairing and the manufacture of artificial limbs. It was a one-legged boy who took me over the building, and as he opened the door to the last room he remarked, "Every man his own leg-maker."

A model farm is being conducted in connection with the hospital, where men who wish to go in for agriculture can get practical experience. And you would be surprised at the number of men who are taking up this work. Yet when you consider the outdoor life which they have led since they entered the service you cannot wonder that the thought of going back to the office or factory is unbearable to them.

Handicrafts in the Hospital Wards

But the reconstruction work is by no means limited to those who are able to attend the classes in the school building. Some of the most important of all is carried on in the hospital wards among the patients who lie in the rows of white beds waiting for the slow healing of their wounds.

This work is under the direction of Mrs. C. G. Wheeler Jones, who is not only a most efficient craftswoman, having at her finger tips no fewer than twenty different handicrafts, but who is also that which is most essential for reconstruction work, a student of human nature, with a rare understanding of all sorts and conditions of men.

It is only a little over a month ago that Mrs. Jones began her work at the hospital, and one need only to pay a visit to any one of the wards to appreciate what has already been accomplished. She has eighteen aids, all young women who have had vocational training and a great part of whom are former school teachers. These women spend the entire day in the wards teaching men in all stages of convalescence to perform some sort of manual labor which will be of benefit either to their minds or bodies, or both—for the object of the work is twofold: it is educational and curative at the same time.

There are dozens of things that a man can do even though he is obliged to lie flat on his back, any one of which will keep his mind so occupied that he will not have time to dwell upon the fact that for the remainder of his life he must wear an empty sleeve or an artificial leg, and at the same time it may develop in him a taste for some kind of handicraft by means of which he may be able to earn a living.

And so as one walks between those long rows of white beds he sees every patient who is able to raise his hand busily at work at some sort of manual labor.

Vocational Training In the Hospital School

When a patient is sufficiently recovered to sit in a wheeled chair the second period of his reconstruction work begins. He is rolled out on the covered porch at the end of the ward, where the reconstruction aid presides over what looks for all the world like Santa Claus's workshop. Here are pots of paints and varnishes, bits of wood, pieces of chintz and wallpaper and all sorts of interesting articles in the various stages of being. Here the patient can put the finishing touches on the work which he began in bed and launch forth into more elaborate efforts.

The third and last stage comes when he is able to climb the wooden stairway that leads to Mrs. Jones's own domain, the real workshop, where all sorts of really beautiful and useful articles are made—salable articles of which any craftsman need not be ashamed.

There are hand looms here on which the men weave pillow coverings and rugs. There are long strips of leather ready for tooling, and a pile already tooled and waiting to be pasted on the neat wooden boxes which have been made for the purpose. There are lovely wooden boxes painted in crude colorings with Russian peasant designs, and carved trays and book-ends and baskets woven of sweet grass and decorated with bright colors. The men who work here are so interested that it is difficult to drive them out at closing time, and there is always a line waiting for the shop to open in the morning.

This, then, is the work of reconstruction, and a glorious work it is, made more glorious by the spirit of the men who have come back to us from the battlefields of France, maimed and disabled to be sure, but quite content to be so; facing the future with the same courage with which they faced the machine guns of the enemy, and filled with the deepest gratitude for the help which Uncle Sam is giving them.

When Rain Falls On the Children's Plans

By JEAN FURNISS

"ISN'T it dreadful when something comes up to prevent the children doing something you have promised them?" asked one of a group of very young and very anxious mothers who were having tea together and discussing their problems in child culture. "What do you do, Elizabeth?"

"Well," answered the charming red-haired person with the large serious gray eyes, "it is quite awful. They are so heartbroken and they make one feel like such a deep-dyed villain for going back on her word; but I try not to promise anything definitely if I can help it at the start. I usually say, 'if the weather is fine'; 'if you are well and very good you may do such and such a thing to-morrow,' and when I am obliged to disappoint them I tell them just why it is impossible to do the thing we had planned and appeal to their reasonableness to make them see the wisdom of giving it up."

"That's all very well," cried Alice, the jolly little mother of the twins, "but at four one isn't a philosopher. I can tell you that when Jay and Jerry could not go to the circus because it rained buckets-ful last Saturday I put on my thinking cap and tried to conjure up some way of making up to them for their disappointment."

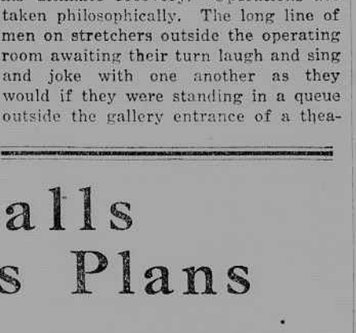
"What did you do?" asked Esther.

"Well," said Alice, "you know I keep what I call my consolation kit. In it are rolls of bright colored tissue paper, gilt and silver paper, paste, scissors and such things. When I saw the tears beginning to roll down the little noses which had been flattened against the window pane watching for the sun to come out I produced a box of animal crackers and my assortment of colored paper, and I called them into my room, where I had cleared a low table for them. I suggested that they dress up the animal crackers as nearly as possible like the animals which they had seen other years in the circus and make a show of their own.

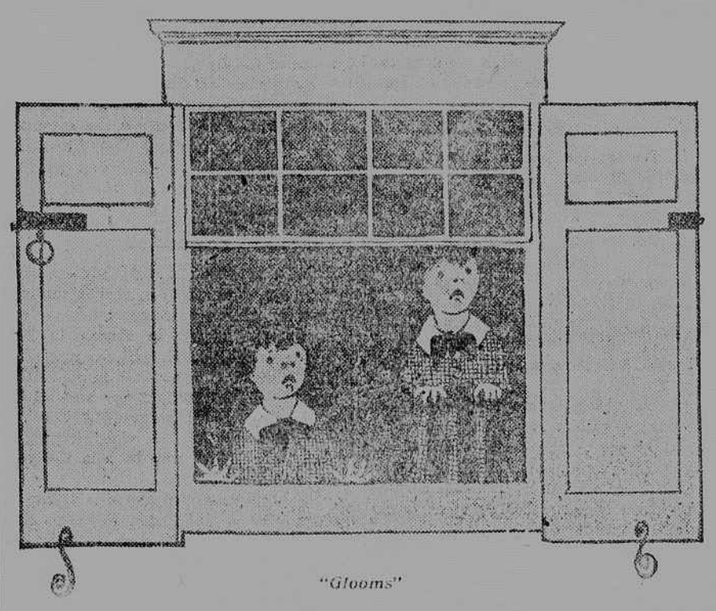
"They were not wildly enthusiastic at first, but they began to grow very much interested, and soon were busily pasting gay trappings on the animal crackers. The tiger sported a red fringed blanket ornamented with gilt stars. The elephant wore a gold canopy and had a royal blue blanket with silver stars and moons on the corners. The lion had a gay red saddle held in place by gold fringe harness, and the horses were caparisoned like the beautiful white ponies of the ring, with red and blue pompoms on their heads and gilt saddles fringed and decorated with stars.

A cracker elephant in circus regalia

"This served to keep the children amused for at least two hours, and by the time there was a goodly procession of animals and their interest was beginning to flag it was 5 o'clock, and home came daddy with popcorn in one pocket, peanuts in another and with toy balloons and a horn, so the afternoon ended with a circus parade nearly as jolly and quite as noisy as the real one would have been."



A homemade lion



"Glooms"

The Servant's Surroundings

[Editor's Note: Another county has been heard from. We think that Maggie has an alibi for her apparent ingratitude. What do you think? Solitary confinement in heaven would be boring. The friendly chauffeur and cook and housemaid were missing in the tiny, perfect place. The social problem is one of the most difficult phases of the servant question.]

By MAY BOSMAN

WOMEN who write about the domestic problem for newspapers and magazines have such beautiful, theoretical views on the subject. "When we treat our servants like human beings," say they, "the millennium will have to come."

They complain of the servants' quarters, and blame *those* when we cannot get and keep a maid. "If she had a bright, comfortable, warm and sunny room, instead of an airless, lightless hole in the wall, how different things would be. And give, oh, give her a modern kitchen, where work is not back-breaking slavery. She will rise up, as a class, and bless you."

Will she, indeed! I have views—and they are not theories. They have builded up out of a long line of concrete disillusions.

Maggie's Surroundings Are Improved

There was Maggie. She worked for a friend of mine as second housemaid. Said my friend at a Hoover meeting: "It is our fault that the servant question has gone awry. I can see the reason for it all too clearly in my own house. I did not build that house. I rent it. I had nothing to do with an arrangement that put servants' sleeping quarters under a slate roof, where they are intolerably hot in summer. There are only three tiny windows, no bath, gas instead of electricity and no way of heating the third story in the winter time. When they come downstairs on winter mornings they must often resent the difference between their lot and ours."

Maggie shared a large, drafty kitchen there with the cook, the first housemaid and the chauffeur. It is an old kitchen, dingy, ill-lighted, dark painted, and the roaches come out at night. There is a coal stove for cooking; the table is twelve feet away from the stove; the sink is ten feet away from the table, and the distance between the butler's pantry and the icebox would equal about a city block. I don't know how many times a day the housemaids have to walk that block.

Maggie got sick, and her mistress sent her to me. "It is the kitchen and her room," said she. "The poor girl needs just what you have to give her."

White Paint and Coziness Are Drawbacks

Let us pause here and enumerate those things which I had to give Maggie—and other servants who might think of coming to me. There are two quiet, book-loving persons in the family, no pets, no children and no guests. We have no room for them. Even the dining room seats four only on a pinch. Her sleeping quarters are on the third floor, but there is an air chamber above, so that she is no greater sufferer from the heat than we are, and the steam heat pressure up there is as satisfactory as it is downstairs. She had a bed sitting room with windows on two sides, done in chintzes, with electric reading lamp, rocking chair and deep willow chair with cushions. Oughtn't they to rest after the housework is done for the day? She has sun all day, either in her bed sitting room or in the porcelain bathroom leading out of it. That bathroom is just like ours.

My kitchen is white, small and compact. I can stand at the gas stove and stir something cooking on it with one hand, while with the other I reach to the table behind me or to the handy shelves above it. (Maggie could do that, too.) Three steps carry me from the pot closet to the stove, and two more land me in front of my icebox. I have every device advertised and recommended by women's magazines for making housework easy.

And Maggie stayed with me twelve hours. Heat and comforts and devices were nothing in Maggie's young life. She went back to the heatless, sunless hole at the top of my friend's house and the drafty kitchen.

"Sure it was all so small-like over there, an' you could see the dirt av it. I couldn't contint meself with white paint."

Finnish Annie and Swedish Kate, and heaven knows how many others, have followed in her wake. It isn't the "hole in the wall" and the kitchen that matters.

The servant question is unsolvable. It was born that way.

Thrift Stamps in Sleeping Bags

EDITOR'S NOTE: If you have an original Thrift Stunt of your own report it to the Director of The Tribune Institute and you will get four Thrift Stamps in exchange, provided the idea is new and practical enough to print.

By EDITH BISHOP SHERMAN

BREATHLESSLY eager to tell her that the Smiths' new baby had arrived, I entered Anne's room to find her bending over a huge pile of fuzzy white goods on her ever-loaded sewing table.

"It's a girl." I announced. "What are you doing, Anne?"

Anne smiled up at me. "Whose girl?" she asked.

"The Smiths'. Came this morning," I answered. "What are you going to do with all of that white stuff, Anne?"

"Good!" She looked calculatingly at the pile of goods. "I hope I have enough to make Mrs. Smith four."

"Four what?" I stared at her. "Four what, Anne?"

Anne suddenly laughed. "I forgot you didn't know about my latest thrift stunt," she explained good-naturedly. "It's really the best of all!" She tried to look modest. "Do you remember how cold it was last winter and how hard it was to keep baby Betty warm? Well, I finally decided upon sleeping bags as the solution, and went blithely down to purchase some, only to return home utterly discouraged. When John asked me why I was so gloomy all I could moan was 'Five dollars! Five dollars for single-faced eiderdown ones and six-ninety-eight for double-faced ones! And Betty would need at least four!'

"But the next day I decided to purchase the eiderdown by the yard and make them myself. I priced eiderdown and found it to be $1.25, one yard wide, single-faced quality, and $1.85 and $2 double-faced quality. If I had purchased the best I would have needed $4 worth to make one bag one yard long and one yard wide. This was a saving of $1.98. But I wanted to do better than that. Surely there was something just as warm as eiderdown, but cheaper!

Table Felt vs. Eiderdown

"On the third day I found exactly the thing. It was a white table felt, fuzzy, warm and just a bit heavier than eiderdown. This could be purchased at $1.75 one yard wide and $2.50 two yards wide. One yard of the $2.50 quality was sufficient to make a bag one yard long and one yard wide, minus an inch or so for seams. However, I decided to make my bags forty-five inches long, and purchased five yards to make four bags. When they were finished the four had cost me $12.60 (10 cents for thread), and they were fully as nice as the $6.98 ready-made ones, four of which would have cost me $27.92. So, you see, I saved $15.32.

"I used warm water and a white soap for laundering, with very careful rinsing and shaking before hanging out in the sun to dry. Although the fuzz wore off after a while, they came in soft and warm-looking from the laundry line and at the end of the season showed scarcely a trace of wear.

"Other mothers saw me using them, and, upon being told that they were home made, asked me to make some for them. I did, and charged them $5 a bag, a saving of $1.98 for them and a profit of $1.87 for me."

Just How To Do It

Anne cut off a length of forty-five inches from her roll of goods and carried it down to her dining-room table, where she spread the whole piece out flat, the length of the bag running away from her. (There is no right nor wrong side to table felt.) She then folded in the two edges toward the centre so that when the baby was lying inside the bag there would be no seam under her and only one seam in the centre of the bag over her. She now stitched across the bottom of the bag and half way up the centre of the seam to the opening, allowing about sixteen inches for the opening. She allowed an inch for the seams, as the felt was inclined to ravel a bit. Next she took her shears and curved the top of the bag, allowing about six inches in the centre of the back-top (which would eventually fit around the back of the baby's neck) to follow the line of the baby's shoulders. She seamed up the shoulders and made a flat hem around the neck and down each side of the opening to where the seam was closed. Strong snappers fastened the flaps of the opening together. She finally overcast all the seams with No. 30 thread. Anne made three in two hours—twenty-two Thrift Stamps earned in cash, or the price of forty-six stamps saved.